

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously presented) A device for absorbing or dispensing a liquid, said device comprising a liquid reservoir and an activatable porous membrane, said membrane being impermeable to gas and liquid, and, upon activation, thereafter allowing liquid to pass therethrough, the reservoir comprising an inlet, wherein the reservoir is at least partly occupied by a porous bulk material, the membrane being hermetically sealed to or around the reservoir so that liquid passing through the inlet must pass across the membrane, said membrane being coated with a soluble layer, said soluble layer being dissolved upon contact with liquid.
2. (Original) A device according to claim 1 wherein the membrane has an average pore size which is greater than 10 micrometers.
3. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 1 wherein the membrane has a pore size distribution is such that 95% of the pores have a size of no more than 100 micrometers.
4. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 1 comprising an inner porous bulk material within an outer membrane, the membrane being hermetically sealed by means of a membrane to membrane seal.
5. (Currently amended) A device according to claim 1 wherein the bulk material is replaced by a void space, ~~characterised in that wherein~~ the porous membrane has an average pore size of from 10 to 100 micrometers.
6. (Original) A device according to claim 5 wherein the liquid reservoir is defined by a wall region, and wherein the volume of the liquid reservoir is variable.
7. (Original) A device according to claim 6 wherein the volume of the liquid reservoir is varied by flexibly deforming the wall region.
8. (Original) A device according to claim 7 wherein the volume of the liquid reservoir is varied by the action of a piston.

9. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 1 wherein the membrane has a bubble point pressure of at least 1 kPa when measured at ambient temperature and pressure using 0.03% solution of Triton X-100 in distilled water as the standard test liquid.
10. (Original) A device according to claim 9 wherein the membrane has a bubble point pressure of from 8 kPa to 50 kPa.
11. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 1 wherein the membrane is a woven mesh or apertured film.
12. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 1 wherein said membrane is permanently activated upon contact with liquid.
13. (Canceled)
14. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 12 wherein said membrane is impermeable to gas both before and after activation.
15. (Canceled)
16. (Previously presented) A device for containing or dispensing a gas, said device comprising a gas reservoir having an inlet therethrough, and an activatable porous membrane, said membrane spanning said inlet so that gas passing through said inlet passes through said membrane, said membrane being impermeable to gas and liquid, and, upon activation, thereafter allowing gas to pass therethrough, said membrane being coated with a soluble layer, said soluble layer being dissolved upon contact with liquid.
17. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 16 wherein said membrane is permanently activated.
18. (Canceled)
19. (Previously presented) A device according to claim 17 wherein said soluble layer comprises polyvinyl alcohol.
20. (Canceled)